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THE LABAN ART OF MOVEMENT GUILD

NEWS SHEET

TWELFTH NUMBER

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EDITORIAL

One of the most lively and interesting features of daily and weekly publications is the correspondence section in which readers express their views on (amongst other things) the contents of the newspaper or periodical. The editor is thereby enabled to " keep his finger on the pulse " of his public.

It is much more difficult for the publications committee of the News Sheet to keep in touch with its readers, for six months elapses between one issue and the next. In an effort to discover the views and desires of Guild members a brief questionnaire has been sent out to a representative selection of members. In the replies so far received* several most constructive suggestions appear. One of these (that a summary of the work of your Council should be published) is being put into effect in this issue.

Much as we should like to print photographs, we cannot do so, because of the expense involved, and for the same reason, examples of dance notation are excluded.

Correspondence was also asked for. Among our varied and talented membership there surely exists someone whose delight it would be to write a really stimulating and provocative letter?

Over to you . . . .

[*If, dear reader, your reply has not yet reached us, we look forward to receiving it as soon as possible.]

CHANGE OF TREASURER

We are glad to welcome Mr. C. D. Ellis as our new Treasurer. He takes over from Mr. A. P. Burman, who has served the Guild so ably over the past four years. On behalf of all Guild members, we offer our most grateful thanks to Mr. Burman for all that he has done for us during this time.

SUMMARY OF THE WORK DONE BY THE GUILD COUNCIL FROM FEBRUARY, 1953–FEBRUARY, 1954

Council has met three times since the last Annual General Meeting. Many topics have been discussed and some decisions have been made. These include the following: —

1. *Constitution.* New draft prepared for 1954 A.G.M.

2. *Membership.* Ways of strengthening Professional Membership. To cover the cost of travelling expenses for the Membership Committee when visiting applicants for Professional Membership, the following fees are now payable at the time of application:

Graduate, £1 1s. ; Sectional Member, £3 3s. ; Fellow, £5 5s.

3. *Subscriptions.* Ways of collecting overdue subscriptions. Individual Council members agreed to write personal letters.

4. *Finance.* A Statement of Accounts is presented at each Council Meeting.

5. *Correspondence.* A variety of correspondence has been dealt with, including requests for help and advice from members at home and abroad, and offers of help for the Annual Conference.

6. *Regional and Affiliated Groups.* Survey of Regional Groups. Affiliated Groups to be eligible to send one representative to the Annual Conference. They are entitled to ask for help from Professional members of the Guild.

7. *Publications.* News Sheet ; suggestions for improvement. " The Art of Movement in Education, Work and Recreation " ; ways of making this publication known—letters sent to Training Colleges, Physiotherapists, etc.

8. *Information Officers.* Their duties decided upon. Lists of books, music and records compiled by them to be published in the News Sheet.

9. *Annual Conference.* Venue. Programme.

10. *Lilleshall Hall Refresher Course for Professional Members.* The purpose of such a course. Programme.

11. *Affiliation to the Conference of Educational Associations.* Affiliation discussed and decision made to apply for Affiliation.

No decisions have been made without much thought and discussion, and the average length of each Council Meeting is approximately seven hours.

PERSONALIA

Guild Council—Council Elections, 1954

The results of these, announced at the Annual General Meeting, were as follows: —

Corporate Members :	*Associate Members :*
Marjorie Bergin	Ursula Bevir
Elsie Palmer	Elma Casson
Gladys Stevens	

DETAILS OF MEMBERSHIP

We welcome to the Guild the following new members: —

Associates :

Miss B. M. I. Carpenter	Lancashire
Miss J. Cooksey	London
Miss D. Davenport	London
Miss K. Doyle	London
Mr. M. Gleisner	New York
Mrs. M. James	Kent
Miss J. Kirkland	Manchester
Miss D. M. Leftley	London
Miss A. Maletic	Jugoslavia
Miss D. E. McEvoy	London
Miss J. Nichols	Staffordshire
Miss J. C. Norton	Bucks.
Miss M. Potts	London
Miss P. M. Ratcliffe	Norwich
Miss E. Watteeu	Surrey
Miss B. Wells	Sussex
Miss E. M. Wilks	London

Graduate :

Mr. J. Armitstead - - - - - Manchester

Affiliated Groups :

Bretton Hall College - - - - - Yorks.
Ipswich Movement Group - - - - Suffolk
Whitelands College - - - - - London
West Riding Movement Study Group - - - Yorks.

Congratulations to new Graduates :

Miss M. Capell - - - - - - London
Miss P. L. Jones - - - - - London
Miss M. North - - - - - Addlestone, Surrey
Miss V. Preston - - - - Addlestone, Surrey
Miss M. Ward - - - - - - London

AT HOME AND ABROAD

ENGLAND

At the Annual Conference reports of group activities were received from members working in Bristol, Liverpool, London, Manchester, the Midlands and Portsmouth.

Evidence of the continuing growth of the Guild is shown by the addition of four new Affiliated Groups during the year.

FRANCE

We have received a letter from Madame Van Veen, with descriptions of her work in France—particularly in Nimes, where the local press has given reports of her lectures and recitals. It appears that her interest in dance has been largely literary—dramatic recitals, poetry, the ancient myths, and so on, presented as solo stage productions composed and performed by herself.

Some time ago, Madame Van Veen met some of Mr. Laban's former pupils, including Madame Dussia Bereska ; she also visited the Studio at Addlestone in the autumn, with two of her pupils.

She tells us that she now finds great interest in the link between the Laban Art of Movement and the spoken word. A number of lectures and demonstrations have been given to, amongst others, audiences in Nimes, with the idea of providing recreation, through dancing, for office and factory workers. She mentions that if the desire to form local groups arises, it might be met, as in this country. From the press reports, we find that, besides including presentations of French literature and verse, Madame Van Veen has made references to Mr. Laban's research into movement. Stress has been laid on the use of space, with themes such as the proportions of the golden mean, and the harmonious relationships to be found within the icosahedron.

Madame Van Veen hopes to visit Addlestone again.

A.H.P.

LETTER TO ALL GUILD MEMBERS

[*A few weeks ago we learnt that Mr. Laban is much distressed at being unable to reply personally to all the kind inquiries and wishes sent to him on his 74th birthday and the New Year from all over the world. We suggested, therefore, that he might do this in a letter in our News Sheet, and we now have pleasure in printing here his interesting communication.*]

Dear Friends,

In accepting the kind offer of the Publications Committee of the News Sheet of the Guild to give a collective reply to the great number of interesting questions which I have received together with your so extremely kind good wishes at the end of the year, I do not want to replace my personal correspondence, but rather to enlarge on a few matters which may perhaps interest you all.

First of all, there is the question as to how far I have recovered from my illness, and often I am asked also what I am planning and doing now. These two questions are intimately interconnected—at least for me—because I have been subjected to what I would like to call two minor miracles.

When I almost thought that my days were numbered, I had the inspiration to use my movement knowledge on myself and started to work assiduously on a series of small movement exercises which I surmised to be beneficial in my special case. The result was that I have regained a fairly satisfying state of health in half the time which much younger people usually need for recovery from the same illness. This looks like propaganda, but it is simply a statement dictated by the desire to encourage others not to forget "what movement can do to man". This is a question which has in fact been systematically investigated for many thousands of years, but its importance has in our day receded into an almost complete oblivion.

The other less personal miracle was, that when I was still lying rather hopelessly incapacitated, I heard that a circle of friends had decided to build up an art of movement centre, and that already a place had been found with ample opportunities to house and to develop such a centre. It is the place of my new address: Woburn Hill, Addlestone, Surrey. Not until several months after I had heard this good news was I able to visit this charming place, with large gardens on a hill just outside London in the Thames Valley. There are also a few buildings just fitted to carry on our work with its manifold branches of interest.

The amount of activity needed for the settling down and the laying of the foundations of future development, in which I soon had my modest share, is the principal reason why, for the moment, I cannot write too detailed letters.

Many of your questions refer to things which I have turned over and over in my mind during my enforced idleness. In reconsidering the many facets of our activities, I have put to myself a number of the same questions about the practice and theory of the art of movement which you ask me now. We work indeed in many walks of life, which at the first glimpse do not seem to be interconnected at all. Many questions refer to the theory and practice in physiologic and psychologic treatment as an extension of

educational work. I shall have to answer some more personal inquiries directly, but it is perhaps worthwhile to mention briefly some typical queries.

I have been asked to give information about the aetiology of definite bodily defects, such as foot deformities (Hallux valgus, etc.) and their connection with barefoot walking and dancing. One question came indeed from a country where people still walk and work mostly barefoot, so that there seemed to be no connection at all with dance or movement exercise. Personally, I think that an all round harmonious use of our weight supporting extremities has a kind of remedial effect—even if such a result is not the direct aim.

On the other hand, it seems to me that a lopsided use of legs and feet in specific occupations and in certain forms of stylised dancing are detrimental, especially for persons with a predisposition to such defects. My main advice can only be to consult a specialist. A practitioner of the art of movement cannot consider himself to be qualified to give physiologic treatment without special study in this subject.

Other questions deal with the effect of shadow movement training on patients lying in bed, sometimes even in plaster and unable to make larger movements. This question is so deeply interwoven with problems of general medicine, that again only a doctor would be able to assess all the advantages and disadvantages of movement treatment in each individual case. There is, however, no doubt that small muscle movements and even the mental preoccupation with problems or ideas of the art of movement can have an influence not only on mental but also on physical health.

Inquiries about the psychological effect of the art of movement and the modern trend of psychosomatic medicine can only be answered by giving the addresses of former pupils of the Art of Movement Studio who help in mental therapy. I think that dance therapy is the most fundamental branch of art therapy. The reports which I have received from my friends and former pupils dealing with the effects of art of movement exercises on mentally backward children or mentally disturbed adults, give me the hope that our art will be able to help to relieve a great deal of human unhappiness. A number of doctors, general practitioners and psychiatrists are interested in the use of this medium of art therapy.

The fields of social welfare and working efficiency in industry are also mentioned in a steadily increasing number of inquiries. For instance, parents inquire whether vocational advice can be given to their children at school-leaving age through movement observation. Such advice has indeed been given successfully in several cases, and this is not surprising, for some general aptitudes of adolescents soon become evident in their movement behaviour. The reaction to specially devised exercises is a great help in the observation of youth.

It is to-day a well-known fact that the typical movement capacity of a working person indicates his or her suitability for employment in definite manual jobs. The much more difficult determinatinon of the mental attitude and adaptability of a person to the requirements of non-manual jobs, such as those of a clerk, engineer, manager, and any other executive, is also

facilitated through movement observation. The development of mental faculties through movement training has been attacked by some of my bold young friends and former students. There are surely possibilities of alleviating a good deal of human worry in this way, but I should like to stress that a great deal of study and experiment is still needed before these attempts will show definite results.

How far the practice of the art of movement can be a help in the guidance of people—young and old—not only in improving their health and working efficiency, but also in the general adjustment to the problems of everyday life, is an inquiry which turns up quite frequently in my correspondence. We have had so many instances of happy group dance experience, which sometimes led to a lasting harmonisation of personality, that we cannot have any doubt of the deep reaching recreational and recovery effect of our art.

Many queries refer to matters of theatrical performance, in which dance and drama are presented to an audience. These inquiries cover different aspects of performance, such as stage displays for child audiences, amateur dance recitals and, of course, professional theatrical work.

It is obvious that in the preparation for, as well as in the presentation of all stage work, movement study has its definite place. But what seems to interest my friends most is the rôle of stage representation with the educative purpose of awakening people's sense of harmony.

What I am therefore asked for again and again is a definition of the harmony of movement and its application to stage work. First of all, I would like to say that harmonious movement is of great importance in all forms of movement study. For instance, in all forms of recovery through movement exercise, harmony plays a leading rôle. If one relaxes in recreational games and dances, one always notices that the movements used tend to have a relatively easy flow. The study of this harmonious ease is intimately connected with the formal or morphologic aspect of bodily attitudes and gestures.

Whereas in the discussion of the earlier mentioned examples of inquiries, I had to draw attention to the physiology and psychology of movement, I must now, in the instance of harmony, mention the morphology of movement. The science dealing with forms seen in nature is called morphology, and is devoted to the study of the form of plants and animals, including the study of the changes of form in expressive movement. In this research the formal attributes of movement have been classified according to their greater or lesser similarity. Transitions between two or more dissimilar forms help to ease the performance of the movements. The ease or unease of moving can be felt by the performer and seen as well as sympathetically appreciated by the observer or spectator. Easy transition from one movement to another gives the feeling of what is generally called harmony, while less easy transitions produce less harmonious or even disharmonious sensations.

These sensations open, however, a deeper aspect of harmony. The dancer shows in harmonious dancing a state of inner concentration in which emotional life and rational concentration are—at least temporarily—linked.

In other dances the struggle between these two mental states can be seen.

Harmonious movement exercise gives an experience of the reconciliation between the often antagonistic inner trends of man, and to provide this experience is one of the main aims of recreation through the art of movement, not only for the stage dancer, but for everybody. Well applied, such exercise can have a lasting effect on the integration of personality.

It makes, of course, a difference whether harmony is reached in a purely intuitive way or whether it is produced consciously. A practitioner of the art of movement has to be aware of the elements of the morphologic rules of harmonious movement, no matter whether he is a teacher, a therapist, an industrialist or an artist. It is, however, questionable whether pupils, such as children, patients, working people, or also performers will need a deeper insight into the theory of the morphology of movement. Most people acquire and apply the skill of easy transitions quite efficiently in a spontaneous way. The trouble is only, that the spontaneous capacity to produce easily flowing movements and the inner integration connected with it degenerates frequently and very early under the impact of modern life. To keep this capacity intact and, if necessary, to re-awaken and to strengthen it, is one of the foremost tasks of a practitioner of the art of movement. Especially in the re-educational side of this activity, a knowledge of the morphology of movement is indispensable. But morphological knowledge has to be applied and not simply to be conveyed intellectually to the trainee. It would be a great error of a doctor to tell a patient all he knows about pharmacology. What the patient needs is a medicine which helps him in his particular case. In order to avoid misunderstandings, I have to stress that this simile does not mean that a movement practitioner is a doctor or even a medical person, but that he has to proceed in the administration of his artistic and educative incentives in a similar way, as a practitioner and not as a theorist.

It must also be realised that observation of movement is very much based on morphologic knowledge. What we primarily observe are shapes of movements, which are the carriers of effort.

Nevertheless, morphology and shape harmony is a specialist study, though an important one for certain types of movement practitioners. This answers also the question why so little is heard about that curious crystal, the icosahëdron. Although shape harmony has its practical outcome, for instance in the system of directional signs used in my dance-notation, few notators and readers of the dance-script are themselves learned morphologists of movement or guides in the maze of icosahëdroid tensions.

I mention this also because questions of notation turn up quite frequently in your letters. I think you know that there are several centres specialising in the subject of dance-script. I must leave it to them to tell you how it works and how one can learn it. I wish only to clarify one point, which seems to be often debated, and this is, whether my stage notation, which is called in America " Labanotation " and its counterpart, " Effort notation ", used mainly in industry, are two essentially different things. These two forms of notation are more intimately connected than is generally realised.

In dance notation, the shape and time components of movement have

turned out to be of paramount importance. Indications of the effort contents of movements are considered as being of secondary interest and are often reduced to simple stress or accent signs, having, by the way, the same or a similar form as the fundamental little diagonal in the centre of an effort graph.

In effort notation, the stress-signs come into the foreground, because of the greater importance which the shades of stresses have in everyday work and expressive behaviour. The morphologic shape elements appear also in effort notation, but according to their lesser importance they are written in a simplified form and often entirely omitted.

If you open a maths. book, you will find a lot of figures and very few words, while in opening, say, a history book, you will find a lot of words, and very few numbers. And both books deal with the same thing—with human thought.

An effort notation book and a dance notation book differ in a similar way, but both deal with the same thing—with the spirit of human movement.

You can imagine that to build up a clearing house for all these problems and aspects of movement practice, tuition and theory is a very absorbing task and, I hope, you will understand why I am using these columns to reply to a few of your most stimulating inquiries. Every number of the News Sheet of the Guild contains indeed a great deal of excellent information which connects our various interests. I have now to restrain myself from taking up more of its precious printing space, and wish to add only the expression of my sincere affection to you all.

R. Laban.

LETTER FROM AMERICA

No, I am not Alistair Cooke, nor do I attempt to come near his skill of writing or speaking. I am just me—that is a dance composer and pianist who tries to understand, judge, like or dislike what is going on in Modern Dance in this country. To say it at the beginning, there is a lot going on in this field, in particular here in New York. I started my " search for the new " in California, where schools and classes are not as numerous as they are here. It is the teaching I am going to talk about now, and later I hope to tell you about some dance recitals.

San Francisco

In San Francisco I went to the Halprin-Lathrop Dance School, where I watched two classes. The first one was mixed, amateurs and professionals, not many, because it was still holiday time. To say it right away: people here are very concerned with the technique, and also with the functional explanation of how the body works, e.g. in this class which muscle should be used to achieve the technical perfection of the exercise. Classes usually start with limbering up, and this is often not very different from purely gymnastic exercises. Many start them on the floor, as did this teacher. This is influenced by Martha Graham, who has set a certain " routine " of exercises which the pupils learn and after a while know by heart, so that quite often this proceeds without much interruption and only occasional corrections

by the teacher. They are based on stretching exercises, and twisting of the body, which sometimes come near to acrobatics and have a pattern of " contract—release ". This release, however, is not a relaxed one, but a guided release with a different kind of tension! In this way the dancer hardly ever gets a chance to relax, and has a pretty strenuous time. They do work hard here on their technique, and you people yould probably " die on the way " (unless of course you have been at the Studio!). But this hard work has enabled most of them, whether amateur or professional, to have control over their body to an extent not comparable to any in Europe. They concentrate and labour so hard that in most cases they forget the joy of moving, and therefore lose sight of their purpose. Watching their faces made me suffer!

To come back to this class. The teacher was a good one as teachers go, building up the class in a logical way. Her exercises, though much of them gymnastic, were well-balanced and sensible, though as I said before, the approach was very much from the " thinking " and not quite enough from the " feeling " for a movement. She explained at length at one time how the movement travels through the body, explaining anatomically the beginning and end of it, which may be all right, but I found that the pupils then thought so much about it that they could not move spontaneously any more. She followed with exercises on the spot, standing, then walking through space in quick gliding steps and with changes in head position which led to changes in direction. On this she finished up her class letting them improvise. This was, I think, about the only class in which I saw any free improvisation. Almost everything else was shown or dictated by the teacher. For the accompaniment she had a student who in the first part of the class used a drum only, and did this quite well. It was uncommon to me the way he filled out the time of the slow movements with a tremolo on the drum, but it seemed to work. During the second half he used the piano, which was rather painful to me. He only took care of the rhythm in very modern harmonies with spare, rather pimply, dabbed notes without much connection, even musically. This made the accompaniment very feeble. Altogether the leaning towards atonal music is very strong. I am a poor orphan compared with them!

At the same school I saw another class in the evening of professionals. There the " routine " went without much interruption, loosening up contrasted with restraint counter-movements, a purely technical class with its sets of movement sequences, similar to the afternoon class, but much more complicated. This time they had a good pianist who played interesting and varied music, though also very modern. This class was followed by a rehearsal for a group dance to a Bach suite. They rehearsed without the music for most of the time, and only at the end they had a record of it. This method of becoming independent of the music I found later a great deal. Every step is counted out in beats, and they must have a fabulous memory for figures to remember it all. What I saw of the dance of six dancers was interesting. It was stylised, and in that way kept the spirit of the music, but had a contemporary flavour.

Los Angeles

My next town was Los Angeles. There are several schools here, too, more than in San Francisco, but not nearly as many as in New York. I went to a studio for an evening class, again of mixed students, but fairly advanced. It was an interesting class with a lot of rhythmical quick footwork. It finished with gymnastic relaxation sequences. The next class was a more advanced one, held by a teacher who is herself a concert dancer. Her exercises were in the line of ballet exercises, with a " modern " flavour thrown in. This was again followed by a routine of the usual exercises. She herself was fascinating to watch, and some of her students were very good and efficient. It required much skill and strength to hold the tempo of such a class. Quite often they do " exercises in a hurry ", as I like to put it, and breathing is taken for granted but not taken into account. There was only one class where I found this different, about which I shall talk later. In this class a sort of " whip-swing " was used, with counter whip-swings of the arms. It was interesting to see how efforts came in (as also in the class in San Francisco, where it was pressing) without making a special feature of it. The class finished up with very difficult acrobatic landings and throwings on the floor. Everything was done with great precision, and it is this precision that strikes one most in all the modern dance here. The trouble is only that so often they forget over their really terrific power and precision that they are dancing. The neatness of the way they dress, tightly and very simply, nothing fancy, in itself shows their approach.

University of California

The next place I went to, several times actually, was the University of California, where the dance seemed to be in very good hands. The teacher, young and good-looking, had had a very good training at Wisconsin University, said to be one of the best places for modern dance. The first class I saw was a composition class where the students were to show an assignment for the first time. The assignment was " Discovery and Response " either positive or negative. The students, who were in their second year, showed quite an ability to deal with their task. Some were further advanced technically, some had little or no technique, and consequently the results were very different in execution, but they had all found a way of making their idea clear. The class was started with a discussion about how to criticise a dance: as, clarity of design ; does it convey what the dancer sets out to do? Does it have structure? The completeness of even a short sequence—beginning, middle, end. Does it have phrasing and is there enough variety and contrast in dynamics, space and rhythm? Is the dancer sincere and concentrated in his dance and is it his own? In this particular case, did the dancer fulfil the assignment? At the end they criticised each other on these lines. This was clearly a constructive and interesting class.

I next visited the elementary school of the University of California. This is a very new, modern, experimental school on a small scale attached to the University. The children are selected and often children of faculty

members. One of the main principles is that one subject is dealt with in all classes, so in this one, Africa was the topic. The teachers have to do extensive research work beforehand, which quite often involves travelling (not exactly to Africa, of course) to places like Red Indian villages in order to find out about the life of a tribe, vegetation and animals around the place. They write a " unit " on this preparative research work and the work on the subject with the children ; the latter is partly planned in advance, and partly developed from what happens in class. I have seen (though not read all) such a " unit ", which is quite an extensive brochure. The teachers are selected students of the university who go in for teaching. They have also a United Nations class where they discuss political and economic problems, including Russia and China, something very rare in U.S.A., and which would not be allowed in most schools. Films are made of the activities of the children, and of the topics on which they are going to work, and quite often they have an hour on a film, say, " In the jungle ", and the next hour work out their impressions. They have an excellent musician, who is also a composer, who improvises for their rhythm classes, sometimes also only on a drum. She takes the inspiration from the children, translating it in her own way, sometimes giving them a basic ostinato for their moving about. This is not dancing, but more an attempt to be as much as possible like an animal, or a train, or any topic on which they work. Their movements tend towards mime in a free way, or towards shaping forms (such as huts) with their human bodies. After some time of give and take, the composer shapes a definite music which they will dance.

The children have created a whole opera with text, music, dancing and decor all done by themselves. This has been filmed and recorded. Another film of this kind exists on another topic: freight-train. I am trying to find out if it is possible to bring this film over to England. These films are sometimes used with or without the music as a stimulus or a guide. The age of the children is six to twelve years. Everything is discussed amongst them with the teacher, and a special effort is made to see that they know the " why " and " how " to do it. At one time they discussed the best way to look like a bear or a deer, and one group watches another so that they can learn from each other. They sit on the floor near the piano, close to the teacher in a very informal manner and are very politely addressed by their teacher, who deals with them with a certain authority but in an informal way. There is a community spirit that aims at holding their interest without the usual discipline. If a child disturbs the class by not listening, the teacher asks the class to wait, because the inattentiveness of one child holds up the class. As they don't like this, they soon get into order without any unpleasantness caused. The children have lots of ideas, they almost tumble over them. A most interesting experience!

Salt Lake City

The university has a good teacher who is thorough and clear. " Direction and Footwork " was the topic for the class I saw, which was an appetiser sample for beginners, to make them interested in the work. The exercises were very simple: forward and backward walking, in a square and through

the diagonal, and the means used to achieve these directions combined with different steps were discussed. Her pianist, very widely experienced, was very good indeed, with an approach similar to mine.

Very different, and not particularly good, were two classes I saw at a High school. The first was of small children to whom the teacher tried to explain the meaning of a phrase in far too grown-up terms. The pianist was not very helpful either, not making it clear and simple enough for them. The movements shown were a bit on the trashy side. The limbering up in the next class of teen-agers suffered from too quick changes and tempi of the exercises, where again the unrhythmical accompaniment disturbed the smooth flow of these. The idea of certain parts of the body leading in an up and down movement was good and well exploited. Other classes at the McCoone School of Music with less and more advanced children were not of great interest to me, except the advanced exercises of complicated counter twists on the floor, which had a mermaid character.

Much in contrast were the children of Virginia Tanner, the director of the " Children's Dance Theatre ", who had an amazing technique together with an intelligent and awake expression. These children danced last summer at Jacob's Pillar, the platform for many interesting dance events, and apparently had a great success. They showed me bits of their performance, including interesting clapping exercises in two groups which developed into a movement conversation. They each had individuality and a genuine way of expressing themselves. These individual movements were fixed after they had been improvised. Another sequence of travelling from one place to another in a resisting or a longing attitude showed signs of excellent training.

New York

At the first school I visited I watched a very boring beginners' class of Graham technique. I call them " vomiting body movements ". An uninspiring drumming went on all the time with hardly any change of rhythm. Maybe I caught a bad teacher! I left the class almost as exhausted as the students. How refreshing after that was a class I saw of another group where, although again great technical perfection and precision were aimed at, the teacher also tried to get enjoyment. Also she used more sensible relaxation after tension than usual. She herself was a beautiful woman who moved in a very fascinating and beautiful way. The same way of known movement sequences was used, but excellently taught. The class ended with free invention of the students on the throwing of an imaginary ball, and the reaction of each member of the group. It was a very good improvisation. Another time I watched a rehearsal of group dances which they are going to perform, and was very impressed by the freshness and (where needed) simplicity of their choreography.

A very stimulating experience was a visit to the Dunham School. Here is a well-guided combination of ballet technique with a sprinkling of modern and a lot of their own characteristic movements of the West Indies. Though the teacher was a white man, he had apparently quite assimilated the quality

of their race. The strength of their legs, trained from bar exercises into free feathering, which they combine with counter-movements in the trunk, is terrific and sometimes comes very near to the acrobatic. They did relax in between, with straight legs in the second position, but on the whole the class was one long continuation of extremely strenuous exercises. I was lucky to hear their pianist, because they don't have music with all their classes. He opened a new world to me of what can be done with counterpointing music. They all aim at this, but very few get it. He had an added quality which made every simple movement into a dance. Syncopating, playing very freely, but still together with them, he even syncopated jumping swings. At the end of the class the teacher improvised, making free use of artistic application of the exercises used before, and the students followed him with very different results. There was no pause ever, and I left highly satisfied with this interesting school. One can't expect this always. For instance, Hanya Holm is certainly a good and thorough teacher who takes pains to explain the why and how of all exercises in a conscientious manner, but I cannot say that the class was very new or inspiring to me. She has taken up the American patterns of exercises with pliés, leg swings, etc., but there is little recognisable of her tradition, and not much variation in the exercises. I was very interested in her accompanist, from whom I had already heard a great deal, and she really plays excellently. She amuses herself by playing jazz, classical, atonal and almost every style wherever it fits, and does this in an exemplary fashion.

One of the most active places in New York is the Y.W. and Y.M.H.A., which is similar to our Y.W. except that it is not a Christian but a Hebrew society. The society sponsors many cultural activities, amongst them, of course, dancing classes. I saw two by two different teachers. The first one was for teen-agers, given by a Graham apostle. This time the technique often reminded me of Eastern movements, a fact which I found confirmed when I saw Graham herself later. The next class was given by a teacher with enormous vitality, humour and rhythm. I enjoyed that class very much. She came from the Humphrey school, which looks to me much more lively wherever I come across it. Her limbering-up did not, for a change take place on the floor! Later on she had a few exercises on this level, which she tried to improve by emotional expression. She had some very interesting rhythmical step sequences, and a helpful pianist, whose only mistake was an occasional overload of music.

The Juillard School of Music is on a high level, and one of the few places which have a very competent dance department. There are ballet and modern classes in equal quantity. I watched one of the latter. It was a Graham technique class for advanced students, and they certainly had to be very advanced to do the things they were requested to do, which demanded a terrific control of balance, with strange twistings of the body and quickness in rhythmical combinations. The pianist this time was excellent, full of imagination, which often ran away with her so that the music became much more powerful than the movement. A rehearsal for a choreographic composition by Doris Humphrey, which followed the class, showed interesting

formations but little humanity. It was to me more like precisely functioning bodies used in a machine-like way for the purpose of formations. José Limon, probably the most outstanding male dancer here to-day, teaches at this school too, and his way of teaching made the purpose of the exercises more apparent. He worked on shoulders, hips and thighs in a turn-in and out. It pleased me to see him work with breathing to improve the movement. He has an artistic approach to technique which makes everything look more alive and less laboured. He also is very fond of irregular rhythms. He showed very little himself, but had a very beautiful, accomplished girl as an assistant.

The last school I visited was the Ethnological School of Dance, where they have character dancing (Spanish), Indian and Modern dance. The latter is given by a young woman who works with great sincerity, using a more human and relaxed technique. She was trained in California and mixes good elements of the Graham technique with her own. Her teaching is less of a routine, and she makes up steps when needed, and this results in a less strained atmosphere. She also experiments with rhythms, being superbly assisted by her composer husband, who has an amusing way of making up variations of Bartok tunes, but has also quite a bit to say himself. Sometimes he too plays " too musically ", i.e. he becomes independent from the quality of the movement and loses himself in musical spheres. This again overpowers the movement or makes it negligible, so that I, for one, listened more than watched. Altogether this class was a refreshing experience.

You see from this report, which by no means covers all the schools, that one finds almost everything here, but there is one thing in common. They are all influenced by the terrifically high development of technique as such, which can't help influencing the arts in their standard of perfection.

Adda Heynssen.

DANCE I HAVE SEEN IN ZANZIBAR

Having now been in Zanzibar a little over a year, I find the first fine flush of romantic interest is wearing off, and I feel more able to observe things dispassionately. Things which at first were almost nine-days'-wonders have become matters of course. Nevertheless, I have still only an awareness of—not a knowledge of—a great deal that is of engrossing interest. This is particularly true of the wonderful variety of dance in Zanzibar.

The island has, for its size, as varied a comparative population as that of America. There are many different languages spoken within the homes, but there are two which are common to all—in varying degrees of perfection —English and Swahili. The varied races, with their many religions and creeds, live amicably side by side. And a newcomer's comment upon this is met with the response, " Ndio. Watu wa dini sana." (Free translation, " Yes, we are a very religious people.")

The introduction of widespread secular education has had, perhaps, some effect upon the attitude towards Dance. Indeed, it has been said to me by educated Arabs that such and such dances are " vulgar ", because they still retain some of their primitive characteristics, and a preference is shown for learning the national dances of Western Europe.

One of the dances so proscribed is the "Lelemama"—a dance performed by married women before married women only, at weddings. The name means " The dance of the mothers ". You will know, of course, that at an Arab wedding the men and women celebrate separately—the women at the house of the bride, and the men at the home of the bridegroom. I have, naturally, only been invited to the women's functions, and can give no impression of what happens at the men's.

At the bride's house, specially invited guests are taken to see the first two phases of the dance, after which they are usually taken back to the room in which the bride sits, immobile and beautifully gowned in white, her eyes lowered, and not a flicker showing that she may be aware of the comments and conversation going on around her. She must sit thus until the bridegroom comes to claim her—sometimes for two or three hours. Her control is the more amazing, since the dancing continues in the courtyard—the insistent rhythm of the drums beating its way into the conversation, until one feels one must succumb to it and dance.

The Lelemama is performed by ladies all dressed alike, standing very closely side by side on a raised dais. In their hands they hold " Mbiu "—the horns of a goat. In the more wealthy tribal communities these may be tipped or banded with gold. They are held at breast height and, guided by the rhythm of the drum, are clicked together with a swift flicking of the fingers. Gradually the rhythm of this movement is taken over by the head and shoulders and so on down, until the whole body is engaged to the ankles, and only the feet remain still. The movement ripples downwards.

The band instruments are played by three Africans—men. The drum is a hollowed tree branch, with goat skin stretched across both ends. The drummer sits on the centre of the hollowed branch, and uses one hand for each end. His rhythm varies so slightly that the changes are barely perceptible—but one suddenly becomes aware that the dance has increased in tempo, and the whole movement might now be described as " contained frenzy ". The second instrumentalist has a kind of flute, made from a cow's horn, and a piece of bamboo. The sound from this is very high pitched and the quarter tones are at first difficult to appreciate. The third instrument is an ordinary round tray—sometimes tin, sometimes copper—it may even be a petrol debe, stretched by heating, and beaten into apparent shapelessness. This is played upon with two pieces of crude rope, made from coconut fibre.

When the tempo has reached such a pitch that one feels that the women cannot possibly continue, the drummer makes a sign and the dance leader —an old woman who no longer takes an active part in the dance—calls an instruction, and the dancers, still keeping the dabbing rhythm throughout the body, bend forward with a gliding movement, until their wrists almost

touch the ground, then rise again, and when they are erect the music abruptly stops. The smooth curling and uncurling of the whole body, without any apparent alteration of the rhythm *through* the body, seems almost impossible. This is the end of the first phase, and an interval of mashairi—verses composed spontaneously by the dance leader or by one of the dancers, and in praise of the bride, the bride's family, distinguished visitors, etc.—follows. The second phase is similar to the first, with slight additions in the form of miming, which suggest tentative love approaches and withdrawals. This is again followed by mashairi, and at this point the main guests are usually invited to partake of some refreshment in the Bride's room.

I was once fortunate, however, in being invited again to the courtyard to see further phases of the dance. This was at the wedding of one of my teachers in training, who knew of my interest in Dance. The next phases of the Lelemama keep the same rhythm as that of the first two, though it is now more clearly accented, and the dabbing becomes more nearly approximated to thrusting when the tempo of the accompaniment is increased. The directions called by the leader now introduce within the rhythm, movements which suggest the emotional reactions of the young bride to the advances of her husband—withdrawal, fear, awakening, co-operation, ecstasy, tears . . . The complete dance, with the mashairi intervals, must take about two hours to perform, but for the observer the rhythm has an almost hypnotic effect, so that she is led without being aware of the passage of time. Throughout the dance there is no really strong movement, no big use of space, and no swift change of direction. Contact between the dancers is kept by light touch of elbow, hand or hip, so that the line of dancers is never disjointed. One is left at the end of two hours, not exhausted, but with a sense of serene inevitability.

I am given to understand, by a Commorian Assistant, that this dance originated in the Comores, and that its atmosphere of restraint is the result of Arab influence—that formerly it was much more primitive. I cannot vouch for the authenticity of this comment, but there is a possibility that it is correct.

In striking contrast to the Lelemama are the fertility dances of a troupe of dancers from the Chagga—a tribe from the mainland. These I saw dancing in the grounds of the old Portuguese Fort (now used as a Purdah Ladies' Club and lent out for various festivities), at the wedding of a wealthy Arab, who had hired two bands and two troupes of dancers.

In these fertility dances, both men and women take part. They paint their faces flat white and on their heads wear " haloes " of black animal hair. They wear a monkey skin apron, with the tail hanging downwards, and a skin belt to which are attached all kinds of " charms "—bits of coconut husks, various seashells, cervicle bones of animals, the horns of goats and sheep, are among those I noticed. They dance singly or in pairs, those not dancing sitting and keeping the rhythm with hands, feet or heads. The dancers move in a straight line, forward from the band, turn, and move back along the original path. The feet are turned towards third position, the knees slightly relaxed, the torso tilts slightly backwards from the hips,

and the shoulders are relaxed backwards, so that the hands fall loosely behind the buttocks. In the right hand a horsetail switch is carried, and this is flicked continuously in a variety of directions throughout the dance. The position of the torso allows for the maximum movement of the abdomen, hips and thighs, to which areas the dance is almost entirely restricted. The powerful rhythmic thrusting, particularly of the abdominal muscles, is truly breathtaking. The rhythm of the accompaniment—entirely percussion—is much more virile and more clearly accented than in the Lelemama. The phases of the dances are necessarily of much shorter duration, but even so, in the performance which I watched, one of the performers—an older woman—was so completely exhausted by her efforts, that the leader of the troupe came quickly to her, muttering " Mshinde " (freely, " She is overcome ") and making passes and signs with his horsetail switch before her face and over her head. These fertility dances are completely uninhibited, and as I saw them only a few days after my arrival here, my reactions were very Western: tense attention, embarrassment, and finally a feeling of complete exhaustion.

In complete contrast to these two dances is the " Mganda "—an African dance performed by many tribes of the east coast and Zanzibar. It grew up, I believe, after the 1914-18 war, and is a burlesque of European rule. It has all the elements of Dance-Mime, and is danced for the sheer fun of it, with or without any reason for celebration. The one I saw was at a small village about ten miles out of the town of Zanzibar. It was performed on a patch of bare earth under a group of mango trees, beginning in the cool of the short evening and going on well into the night.

The " set piece " was a small " duka " (shop), which was very realistic indeed—even to the amusing variety of goods hanging up, or displayed on the table or floor for sale—water pots, a bicycle, ladies' underwear, men's fezzes and Kofias, etc. Near the duka, on a box, stood the " King " of the festivities, a man of esteem in the village. In this case, he bore a striking resemblance to an eminent European in Zanzibar—the tall slender form, with slightly drooping shoulders, the almost ascetic features and even the somewhat disdainful upward tilt of the chin. The part of the " King " is, as the name implies, that of a figure head. He remains on his box and takes part in the dance only in the continuous rhythmic dabbing in the head and shoulders, and with occasional very expressive flicks of the hands or hips. The " company " are immaculately dressed in white or pastel shade shirts and slacks of the most lovely shades, all most carefully creased. Each carries a miniature symbol of office or status in his right hand—a tiny despatch case, a gaudy silk handkerchief, a pen, a blotting pad, a packet of envelopes, a switch, a tiny native drum, and many others.

When the percussion accompaniment begins, there are only a few of the company in the arena. They begin to move with a small light movement of head, shoulders, hips, and a rhythmic stamping. This foot movement carries the dancers imperceptibly sideways, in an arch, and almost equally imperceptibly others join the line, which gradually bends round into a circle, until the whole arena is completely surrounded and in the circle are

" representatives " of every form of governmental, military and administrative department. One is only aware of what each represents by the symbol he carries, or a single garment worn—except in the case of the "Admiral". Where this eminent personage's magnificent uniform originates I cannot say, but I believe it is a great treasure, lent from village to village, and with keen competition for the honour of wearing it.

The " Admiral " struts around the circle, inspecting his company, his miming a most amusing travesty. He periodically joins in the circle, and comes out as the spirit moves him. Then there are the " sisters "—usually men dressed for the part in native women's costume with the most wonderful hair styles or head-dresses, but women sometimes do take the parts. The " sisters " do not move in the closely packed circle, but within the arena formed by the circle. Their performance is most amusing. They will dance with complete abandon for a spell, then suddenly stop, fix one or other of the men in the circle with their eyes and a pointing finger, advance threateningly upon him, and reprimand him, or feint to take his pulse or to feel his forehead.

Finally there is the " Jester "—and his dancing is the most vigorous in the whole performance. It becomes almost frenzied as the night advances, with intervals of subtle miming of first one official and then another. He is dressed very soberly in complete contrast to the rest, and may carry a horsetail switch, a small cane, or a frond of coconut leaf.

Anyone among the onlookers, who wishes to, may join in the circle, and any member of the circle may suddenly leap into the arena and dance a vigorous dance, in which leaps and twists and strong rhythmic foot and body movements are displayed. Before the night is out, everyone present has taken an active part.

This description does not do anything like justice to the simple humour of the dance, but its very simplicity makes it difficult to render in words. Movement is so much better a medium of its expression.

Throughout the dances I have attempted to describe here, the movement was mainly in the medium plane, except in the case of individual dancers in the " Mganda ", when forward free flow often led into extension into high and deep. The use of space, also, was mainly limited to forward, or to that upon the axis of the body, or of one particular member of the body. But the main impetus being always from central to periphal, this apparent limitation does not in any way detract from the absorbing interest for the onlooker, nor from the complete absorption of the dancer.

I have seen, however, religious dances, by men only, in which the deep and high planes have been most beautifully used and in which exploration into space, together with contrasting effort combinations, have resulted in a perfection of performance which is deeply dramatic. I would like to try to describe these in a later article, together with some Hindoo dances I have seen, and the simpler of which I am now being taught.

Eileen Akester.

REFRESHER COURSE FOR CORPORATE MEMBERS AT LILLESHALL HALL, OCTOBER 9th to 11th, 1953

The week-end at Lilleshall was planned to give Corporate members and aspirants to corporate membership of the Guild time to meet and work together. Miss Ullmann and Mrs. Bodmer led the group and took as their theme for the week-end, " Shape and Flow ". Also, the week-end offered the opportunity for those seeking corporate membership to meet Miss Ullmann and Mrs. Bodmer individually and for some to go through the unenviable experience of teaching other members of the group.

The enthusiasm of everyone was obvious in the way all entered into the work on the first morning. Miss Ullman started with a most penetrating—in all senses of the word— and enjoyable session on " Shape " and Mrs. Bodmer followed with a session on " Flow ". In her own inimitable way, she worked with the class until none could help but achieve some improvement.

The afternoon was devoted to individual interviews and " homework ". A task was set and the resulting sequences were used in the evening for movement observation. Mrs. Bodmer ended the day's work with a light-hearted and delightful social dance.

Sunday morning was spent in discussion and more practical work and the work of the course ended at lunch-time.

Many people commented on the pleasure of meeting members who joined the Guild in its earliest days and the week-end had something of the atmosphere of a reunion. That it was enjoyed socially as well as educationally was evident even though the concentrated activity made some of us realise that we really were the older members of the Guild!

This report cannot end without a word of appreciation of the amenities and the consideration shown to us at Lilleshall. Not a little of the pleasure of the week-end was due to the fact that we were able to live and work in such pleasing surroundings.

Chief thanks, of course, go to Miss Ullman and Mrs. Bodmer. So many people expressed a desire for further courses of this type, and that alone is a demonstration of the great appreciation felt by those who attended this course.

Margaret Dunn.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE, 1954

Secretaries' Report

Our Annual Conference was this year held for the first time at the new home of the Art of Movement Studio at Addlestone. It was a great pleasure for us all to have this opportunity of visiting the Studio, and the Spring-like weather made exploration of the grounds an added delight. The greatest delight of all, however, was undoubtedly the fact that we had Mr. Laban with us once again, looking as fit and energetic as before his illness.

Fifty members were present during some part of the week-end, a record number for attendance at Conference. Meals, which proved excellent, were

taken at the Ship Hotel, Weybridge, by the majority of people. Twenty-eight members were resident during the week-end, either at the Studio, in students' rooms, or in nearby hotels, and most of these, on arrival on Friday evening, took the opportunity of meeting one another at the Studio.

Activity began in earnest on Saturday morning, when enjoyable practical sessions running concurrently were taken by Lotte Auerbach and Geraldine Stephenson. After mid-morning refreshments, we gathered to hear the Laban lecture, and counted ourselves privileged and fortunate in the extreme that this year it was given by Mr. Laban himself. (A report of this will be found elsewhere in the News Sheet.)

After lunch, members had a little time to relax and talk to their friends before attending the Annual General Meeting, which began in the late afternoon. The most important decision here was the acceptance, with very minor alterations, of the draft Constitution recently circulated to all members. It was interesting, also, to hear from several members present of the growth and activity of our various Regional and Affiliated Groups, and to realise how the work of the Guild is spreading.

The last activity of the day was an ingenious session of dancing together planned and taken by Lisa Ullmann, Sylvia Bodmer, Lotte Auerbach and Geraldine Stephenson.

On Sunday, we spent an extremely interesting morning listening to talks given by Joan Russell on her work in a Training College, Hilda Brumof on her visit last summer to West Berlin, and Chloe Gardner on her therapeutic work in a Mental Hospital. The morning, and the Conference, ended happily with a brief practical session taken by Sylvia Bodmer.

After considerable discussion, it was agreed by the majority of people that the Conference should be held at the Studio again next year. We all felt that here at last in Addlestone we had a real home for the Guild, thanks to the generosity and hospitality of our Chairman, Miss Ullmann. We shall look forward to many more such happy gatherings here, and hope that an increasing number of members will be able to share our pleasures in the future.

PRACTICAL SESSIONS

We had three practical sessions this year. On Saturday morning, Lotte Auerbach took half of us for a study class. The first study was a group one on dramatic tension, very cleverly built up on the three levels. The second was in contrasting lyrical style, a canon of four groups. It was a pity that we could only sketch this through, because of the short time available. Geraldine Stephenson took the rest of the group for a gay little dance in which the flow of meeting and parting was brought out.

In the evening, we started a four-part "symphony" on "Near and Far", each "movement" of the symphony taking a different aspect of the theme. Gerry's group interpreted it with a dramatic scene in which the materialists, with narrow working movements, opposed the visionary, far-reaching idealists. Lisa's group looked at the theme from the point of view of the two moods "Remote" and "Present". She presented them as a

beautiful space-flow study in icosahedric formation, contrasted with two rhythmic closed groups. Lotte took the third part as a lively group sequence in which near and far were amusingly applied to comic-grotesque partner relations.

Sylvia took us all for the finale, in a group dance which we finished on Sunday morning. She took near and far as an inward and outward projection of the individual and the group, with opening and closing movements and formation. Not only was this whole symphony extremely enjoyable to do and to watch, but it was so well and so simply conceived that I think we all went away stimulated to attempt greater things ourselves.

Valerie Preston.

LABAN LECTURE, 1954

(Reported by Mr. Laban's Secretary, Miss D. Bond)

Upwards of fifty members gathered on Saturday morning for the customary annual Laban Lecture.

Mr. Laban said he was pleased to see again the kind, familiar faces of so many friends—members of the Guild. He wanted to speak that morning on that " curious thing " of which they had probably heard, namely, " THE ART OF MOVEMENT ".

Mr. Laban went on to say that he would touch, for a moment, on the general lines of his research during a fairly long life. As was known, his early youth was spent in the Balkans, but he had had occasion to travel not only through Europe but to most of the countries in the world, during which time the cult of the Dance had appealed to him with a growing fascination. In passing through Northern Greece he had noted the remains of the old culture, and when he visited Asia Minor he found a totally different kind of expression in movement (the outcome of a different civilization) presented notably in the dance of the Dervishes. The main idea of this " dance " was the evolution of the stars around their centre—Allah. The exercises of these Dervishes could be traced back to much older civilizations, probably those of Egypt and Babylonia.

In course of time, Mr. Laban has seen the theatre and dances of the Far East and, finally, he visited the territories of the Red Indian and made a study of their ritualistic dances.

The interesting thing which both impressed and puzzled him was the fact that in all these civilizations, traces could be found of a two-fold approach to Movement. The Greek verbs " chorein " and " orchesomai " both mean dancing, but refer to two different aspects of the art of movement. In passing, it might be noted that the word orchestra was derived from the Greek word " orchesomai ". The orchestra is a place at which people were brought together for the purpose of harmony.

One type of dancing was social and later denoted an exhibition for the entertainment of an audience. The second was a form of personal expression which carried no thought of an audience. Lucretius, who was born in Greece

and who wrote a great deal about the evolution of dance, uses the word " exorchesomai " as descriptive of the " dancing out " of the Mysteries of Eleusis. There were no words which could express what the initiated had experienced and movement only was found to be the medium of the highest approach to the Complete Life and its most profound secrets.

Mr. Laban said when he first saw the Chinese Theatre he realised that there, possibly, was the highest cultivated stage dancing in the world—a true representation of the inner life of man. In the Chinese form, again he noted the two kinds of movement. First, in the ordinary Dramatic Street Dancing (a very refined presentation by the way, far from the usual gyrations of this kind) an entertainment for the onlooker, and secondly, the rhythmic, remote response to an inaudible call, the expression of what is normally invisible and intangible.

It would appear, therefore, that this duo-fold order of movement which might be called the fact of positive and negative, light and dark, outer and inner, attraction and repulsion were inherent in all races.

Mr. Laban went on to say that his attention and interest had recently been gripped by an article in the " Dance Observer " written by Sophia Delza upon Chinese Exercise Techniques. The article was most revealing in recording that the art of movement had been practised by the Chinese many thousands of years ago and approximated almost precisely to his own realisation of this art. This was in a way a chastening thought, but a happy confirmation.

The article described how the writer was intrigued by a remark in a Guide Book that a display of the " ancient type of gymnastics " which she was told were exercises of " groups of elderly gentlemen " could be seen in an adjacent park. What she saw, she says, was so startling and so interesting from every point of view that the impression could never leave her mind. Not only " elderly gentlemen " took part, however ; there were many young people of both sexes, too, who were " exercising in a very unaffected way, not in the least disconcerted by a stranger on-looker. The forms being done (patterns) seemed never to be repeated ; the dominating quality was that of movement flowing endlessly—(the famous " flow ")—like the perpetual motion of a river.

A translation of the name of these exercises, "T'AI CHI CH'UAN " is "The Art of Gymnastic Movement". Mr. Laban said that this expression had been well-known to him, but he confessed that he had not fully realised the exact translation. He was not aware that the expression "Art of Movement " dates back to 1,000 A.D. and was, as Sophia Delza confirms, the culmination of centuries of experiment and thought on the subject of exercise for physical, emotional and intellectual health. " Even from the earliest times in China," she says, " a distinction was made between the various forms and uses of body design and body expression: (1) Those designed for commemorative and ritual purposes ; (2) Those that were intended to stimulate and direct the minds of the audience ; (3) Those used to stimulate and direct the feelings and the mind of the doer himself . . . It is related that in prehistoric China there had been a great flood which left stagnating

waters which infected the atmosphere. Thereupon the ruler, Yu (2,205 B.C.) ordered an organised series of ' Great Dances ' to be instituted, for, he said, since stagnant waters cause contamination, the same would be true of an inactivated body ".

As a systematically studied vehicle of healing, dance had been employed as far back as 3,000 B.C. This aspect of movement was known as KUNG-FU, meaning " work done ", implying that the patient himself does the remedial work in his leisure time for himself. " KUNG-FU . . . restores harmony in the body ". An important point to be noted is that T'AI CHI CH'UAN is for the *doer* only ; there need be no audience. Mr. Laban pointed out that pleasant as it was to watch the exercises of a modern educational dance group, the primary thing was the " doing ". He felt that everyone present that morning at the dances of the Guild members would subscribe to this.

Mr. Laban then went on to say that there was a tendency to gravitate towards the " mysterious " in reaching out for truth. In his view, the clue lay in the wonderful revelation lying dormant in the rightful approach to movement. Undoubtedly there was the visible and the invisible, but he would prefer to call this the tangible and the intangible. Movement needs neither to be heard nor seen to be realised: it must be felt. He was coming to the realisation that the ancient peoples knew more about life by the bodily realisation of the truth of it than many of us who live in this atomic age.

One could describe life as a circle. The usual direction was to proceed in a clockwise direction, but he postulated that if one could but master the anti-clockwise direction and be in command, as it were, of all the directions possible to us, that would give us the sense of fulness of life mentally, physically, and even spiritually. If one rapped the table, one could hear that particular sound, but were there not other sounds in the air only awaiting the right reception, say by wireless, to be enjoyed? Objects invisible to the naked eye were made apparent through a microscope. In the same way the study of movement was beneficial to penetrate the border of infinity. It was necessary to learn to move " the other way round ", as it were, in order to tap the possibilities of life. A study of nearly all the religions of the world showed that movement in ritual made the ideas of worship tangible. In manual work it could be noted that not only did the workman go through the necessary movements of his trade, but that upon cessation he held within himself a certain tautness as though " living " in the space recently explored by him.

Mr. Laban said the knowledge of movement exploration enabled the personality to rise. One is born with a certain personality, but a great deal had been said about " temperament " in the past ; it was possible to master the temperament by means of movement exercise. The two aspects of movement he believed were meditation and extraneous flow—relaxation and action were the keys of life. Mr. Laban mentioned the power achieved by the Yogi, who had realised the importance of the meditative movement side of life. Movement, Action and Relaxation was in old time for many people the upward path to real civilization.

The meeting was then thrown open and Miss Ullman suggested as a point of discussion that it puzzled her to think that we were no farther on, as it were, after thousands of years of effort. Why did we always have to " start again ". A member said in response to this that she did not think man progressed in groups and that it was necessary for the individual to make his or her contribution of experience.

A discussion then took place as to whether social conscience was more alert to-day and it was suggested in this connection that easier communications and transport made it easier to render help to a larger number of people, but it was doubted whether the basic instincts of man had changed to any extent.

Miss Ullmann finally said that she thought, in contemplating the circle of which Mr. Laban had spoken, that one must not only think of this as a linear thing, but that such circle contained a great deal which had not yet been touched. It was necessary to imagine a sphere in order to find in it the expression of the fulness of life as it could be lived in the happy moments of dancing.

A member then said on behalf of the meeting that it was a delightful thing to see Mr. Laban back again to talk to them and that he had been greatly missed the previous year. Another member said Mr. Laban always profoundly disturbed him in making him think of things which were normally beyond his scope of thought ; this provoctaive spur was of great benefit to him.

Mr. Laban responded by thanking the members for their appreciation and said he was pleased to be the disturbing element in so good a cause.

A VISIT TO LUTON HOO

While at Ashridge, several of us went over to see the collection of works at Luton Hoo, a beautifully situated house built by one of the Adam brothers, and owned by the Wernher family. The house is built with a wing at each end, and it is in one of these wings, with its superb oval spiral staircase and high roofed hall which was once the chapel, that the collection is housed. The collection includes, amongst other treasures, pictures, ceramics, jewellery, furniture, superb examples of Gobelin and Beauvais tapestry, and some fine ivories and mediaeval religious reliquaries. All are so well arranged that one can really see and study each piece, and it is, of course, impossible to describe more than a few. The fine delicate work in the jewelled sprays of " snowdrops ", for example, each flower being a pearl suspended in a tiny gold cup, and the rich colours of the enamel ornaments were a delight to the eye and interesting historically, because they were in the main designed by a French craftsman of renown, Faberge, who worked for the Russian Tzar's court.

The placing of three Rembrandt portraits close to each other was interesting, because it enabled us to see how the artist portrayed with such vivid clarity the character and mood of his subjects in the poise of the head and expression of the features. One showed in lively colouring, a genial,

rosy-faced, bearded countryman, with friendly humour shining from his blue eyes and the curving lines of the cheeks. The next was a complete contrast. Dim and sombre, it showed a philosopher with eyes sunk inward, smooth flat cheeks and long nose and chin—the latter very strong and brought up into a protruding lower lip which gave a dominance and hardness to the whole expression. The third portrait was of a young girl. The face painted at an angle seemed to come out of its frame toward the observer in its anxiety and horror. The small round head, painted cheeks and lips and tousled hair seemed to belong only to a young street girl whose lover had left her, and the picture was painted with a fine delicacy of colouring widely different in texture from the other two.

Another treasure that was interesting for the " movement observer " was a mediaeval reliquary in copper and silver of three standing figures. The centre one was carved with under-curving lines, and the whole attitude of the face and figure was that of " gathering ". It seemed that concern or other compassion was radiating from every line carved in the metal. The figure on the left was utterly different. The face came out in one sharp angle, ending at the nose! Staring eyes, full of anxiety, thrust out " into the future ", and this attitude was reflected in the upright carriage and the angular lines of the drapery. The third figure was clearly that of a philosopher. The face was chiselled away on cheek-bones and jaw in triangular fashion, like an ascetic. The eyes were distant and sunk in contemplation of a vision. The attitude was serene and still.

Coming away, we wondered whether we really saw what the artist and craftsman had in mind or whether our interest in movement had given us too lively an imagination in our vision. Nevertheless, we had a lively experience and look forward to another visit some other time.

SPACE HARMONY—IV

If you wind a ball of wool, you go round and round the centre core which you have prepared. In order to make the ball nice and round, you keep winding this way and that way, filling all the spaces around the centre equally well. This is not very much unlike the movement of our arms and legs, which have the ability to gesticulate around our body freely, swinging from one side to the other or forward and backward or anywhere else. In our daily actions we are often compelled to circle or loop with our arms around our body, as, for instance, when washing up. The plate in front of us in the sink is wiped by moving the mop over its surface, then it is carried over to one side and placed on the draining-board, and perhaps we might pick up a towel from the rack above and, after drying it, put the plate on the table behind us. In all these motions we swing our body hither and thither, turning this way and that way in a peripheral manner, describing loops and curves around our body similar to the threads in the ball of wool.

So we come to distinguish between " peripheral " and " central " movements. Of the latter, I have previously spoken a great deal when explaining dimensional and diagonal directions intersecting one another in the centre of the body. The former I mentioned too, for instance, in connection with

dimensional movement sequences such as the circle of admiration and resignation when moving the arms over sideways to high and leading them down again the same way.

Now I should like to consider further such movements which avoid a central pathway and which circle around the core of the body. Immediately three circles spring up in our mind which are clearly distinct from one another in their bodily function as well as in their expressive—impressive quality.

Try the following:

(1) a movement leading from downward over forward, over upward, over backward to downward again,

(2) a movement from downward over left side, over upward, over right side, back to downward,

(3) a movement from the right side over forward, over left side, over backward, returning to the right side.

With movement (1) you have circled over the up-downward and the backward-forward dimension and you have used the left-right dimension as an axis for your circle.

Now emphasise the four points in this circle where the dimensions cut through it. Your movement begins to pronounce a certain rhythm which is marked by the consciousness of definite points in the space surrounding us. These are the points, deep (d), forward (f), high (h), backward (b).

When you perform the other two circles, you will be able to experience similar stresses. In No. (2) your movement includes again the high-deep dimension by reaching up at one time and at another low down, but this time combined with the right-left dimension, and the points which are now to be stressed are: deep (d), left (l), high (h), right (r), etc. In moving from one point to the other in succession, you circle around your body centre in such a way that the forward-backward dimension serves you as an axis. Movement No. (3) is a circle which is interesected by the right-left and the forward-backward dimensions. In performing it and marking well the places where the circle is cut, the following points become distinct: right (r), forward (f), left (l), backward (b).

In this way you have become acquainted with six points surrounding you and which in future may serve you as points of orientation in the spheric maze of the space in which we move. They are: h, d, l, r, b, f.

If you move now freely in the three circles just outlined, you will find that your body functions differently with each one. You can, of course, perform any of the circles in two ways, this is, travelling in one direction as well as in the counter direction. Try the following: start in " h ", move over " f ", " d ", " b " to " h ", your body will execute a kind of wave, first curling downward and then uncurling over backward to upward. You can stress this curling action by letting go into a roll and somersault.

You will have a different bodily experience with a sequence of the following points: r, h, l, d, r. In allowing your whole body to be circled around thus, you will find yourself cartwheeling along without changing much the flat sheet-like outstretched carriage which we assume in the natural upright position. You will feel a further difference of bodily function when

you follow a line of movement from r over f, l, b to r. You will notice how you begin to twist from one side to the other and how you can spin in this circle, using the spring power which is contained in the twist.

With regard to the mental-emotional content of these three circles or parts of them, I should like to refer you back to my first article in News Sheet No. 9, page 18, lower part, when I mentioned submission and pride in command and expression of admiration and resignation. I might add here the circular gesture leading over forward to the open side as that of a priest when blessing. The reverse movement where the arms are first opened to the sides and then moved forward so that the hands meet, signifies a concentration as in praying.

Peripheral movements need not always circle around the body centre. Remember the four diagonals with which we became acquainted when we investigated mobile and fluent movements leading into flying off and falling on the ground. Each one of these diagonals may become an axis to rings of peripheral movements. Take, for instance, the diagonal right-high-forward and left-deep-backward. You will find that your arms can easily circle around its top end and your legs around the bottom end. Try the following: right arm h - r - f - h and repeat several times. Then left leg d - l - b - d, also several times repeated in order to get the "feel" of the movement circling around a centre other than your body centre. Perform both arm and leg movement simultaneously: r. arm (h - r - f - h / l. leg) d - l - b - d and you will find even more how your limbs are concerned with centres outside your own.

Perhaps you will even notice the body middle is wedged between the two rings which run, as it were, in two planes parallel to one another. The centre of one circle is connected with that of the other one by a line which is the diagonal rhf/ldb and which, as you will remember, passes through your body centre. The two rings surrounding the diagonal, one at the higher and one at the lower end, have a constricting effect on the mobility and "flying" quality of it. You will feel this when you do the following: Start from body centre, toss body r h f and then l d b, after that collecting your limbs again in body centre. Now lift right arm to h and execute several times circle r-f-h, returning with arm to body centre, put left leg d and circle with it l-b-d, pull leg finally again to body centre, and once more toss your body out into the diagonal, this time starting first towards the lower end l d b and finish with a flying movement out r h f. You will have experienced the freedom and fluent mobility of your movements in the diagonal on the one hand, and on the other the constricting influence of the two rings surrounding it. This experience will become particularly evident when the body and the free limbs are brought into the line of the axis around which the movement is circling. For instance, right arm h-r-f-h, while left arm and leg are extended towards diagonal l d b, or left leg circling d-l-b-d, etc., both arms reaching towards r h f. When both circles are executed at the same time, there is a clear feeling of the body centre being wedged in between the two and holding the balance of the diagonal axis.

Since every diagonal can become the axis to two parallel rings, there are three more sets of such rings to be found in the sphere surrounding our body. They are:

Axis:	l h f — r d b.	Rings:	h,l,f and d,r,b.
„	l h b — r d f.	„	h,l,b and d,r,f.
„	r h b — l d f.	„	h,r,b and d,l,f.

You can perform these rings with either arm or leg, stressing with the free limbs the opposite end of the axis. Some of these movements, you will discover, are on the open side of the body and others cross over to the other side. Some are high above and some down below, some in front, and some behind. These *circle* rings, with their centres outside our body, together with those which circle around our body centre, give a basis to a harmonious order in the maze of our peripheral gesticulations in every-day actions: winding, looping and circling about like the threads of a wool ball.

Lisa Ullmann.

RHYTHM AND DANCE

To-day, man may choose to feel that his primitive ancestry is far behind him, yet there are few who do not respond in some way to the deep resonant beat of a drum, and in doing so realise that within themselves are unexpected depths, primitive forces not beyond recall. Man's response to a rhythmic stimulus has been measured in terms of respiration, circulation and muscle tone, but little evidence has been gathered to show why particular rhythms should affect him in different ways, what principles of structure govern the form of these rhythms and how the mind receives, breaks down, groups, or in any way consciously or unconsciously relates itself to this rhythmic structure.

A rhythm may evoke a mood, and the response be an emotional one, or it may be felt and appreciated more in the abstract. Primitive rhythm will appeal directly to the body, usually encouraging it to move with strength, whereas later and more sophisticated forms of rhythm are appreciated more consciously aurally and appeal to the intellect by means of their shape and the intricacies of their construction. In the appeal of form and of changing shape, there is a close relationship between musical and visual rhythm, due in part to the similar way in which the mind relates itself to any succession of shapes extending into space, or sounds extending into time.

In the songs of birds, or the calls of animals, are sounds that are found musically satisfying and yet which it is impossible to set between the lines of music notation. There are already evident in these sounds certain principles of rhythmic organisation, also to be found in the first chants and songs of man. Where dance is complete it encompasses the whole body, and movement naturally extends to the voice into sound and song. The voice is capable not only of flow and sustainment, but may also be used percussively. Its mechanism, in contrast to that of the body, being less limited by gravity, is more adaptable, and in consequence its rhythms possess greater freedom. Vocal rhythms precede any form of instrumental

rhythm, and at first phrases of different length and of irregular rhythm are blended together to form mysteriously a satisfying whole. With the intellectual development of man, language has become a highly efficient tool, and yet for primitive man its form was even more expressive of feeling. It was not only in its images and pictures, a poetry, but having both rhythm and melody, it was in in itself music. A characteristic of primitive music is the close relationship of rhythm and melody, and this has been highly developed by the African and the Balinese peoples in instruments like the xylophone. In Africa, even flutes and horns are played in groups to make a percussive music, and many stringed instruments exist which are played with marked rhythm. The breadth of their technique is that, although the melodic instruments may be used percussively, percussion instruments are also capable of sustainment and flow, and are used melodically ; thus the dynamics of drum rhythm is provided by the contrast of sounds high to low. In the languages of peoples with a strong rhythmic tradition, the pitch of the syllables within a word is essential to its meaning, for a change of inflection would make a word unintelligible, or, alternatively, provide it with a new meaning. In sending messages upon the slit-drum, the African does not reduce his language to any kind of morse-code, but, simply using a restricted vocabulary, shapes the actual words upon the drum by means of their pitch. The drum is literally a " talking drum ".

Use has been made in drumming of a special language built up from syllables, each of which represents a different sound made upon the drum. In its origins, this language shows how clearly drum rhythm is related to the inflection and rhythm of speech, and where, with the intellectual progress of man, language becomes less rhythmic, more even in pitch, then rhythm too has lost much of its primitive vitality, and the phonetic syllables serve only as a means by which rhythms may be taught and remembered.

An African example of drum language making use of marked accent and change of pitch:

ka-BI-ti-ku / ka-BI- ti- ku / pa-KA- bi- ti- ku /

A variation from classical Indian drumming, without stress and with little vocal inflection:

kita tutu kitataka gadigina / dha ta ghin na / dhi ta kita dha / tutu kitataka gadigina

These phonetics are used also with stick drumming, and from 16th century France, Thoinot Arbeau in his "Orchesography" gives many rhythms and their variations, e.g.:

tere fre fre tere tan, fre tere fre fre tan.

To-day, the jazz drummer makes use of a vocabulary derived in part from military drumming, as, for example:

Flam-a-diddle, paradiddle, ruff ruff-a-ma-tap

The unity of primitive life suffers when an intuitive way is replaced by one of reason, and thereafter thought is seen constantly in opposition to feeling. The essential difference between the first musical sounds and rhythms made by man and the calls of animals, is that the former possess a clear pulse or beat and yet still retain a freedom of form. Such freedom

is to be found in the earliest songs ofthe Esquimaux, of the Indians and of many primitive peoples, and evidence shows, as in the Veddic chant of India (which is probably one of the oldest and most primitive musical expressions still in existence to-day) that the first free creations of man were later adapted to fit within a fixed musical structure. Free rhythm may be harmonious, and yet without any obvious pattern, defying conscious analysis. Where music making becomes a more conscious process, where sounds are counted and calculated, the more primitive and intangible relationships are rejected, or adapted to conform to a more rigid framework.

The simplicity of the more metric rhythms, the three and four of our waltz and march time, does not indicate that they are the first rhythms likely to have been used by man, but rather their appearance indicates the impact of thought upon the previous tradition of a spontaneous free rhythm. The contrast between the free rhythm often found in primitive music and the symphony is not unlike that between the simple peasant dwelling and the cathedral, for where in the one there is irregularity, shapes or sounds being freely related, there is in the more conscious development a refinement of detail and a strictness of metre, the regularity of supporting columns and buttresses and the even distribution of windows being paralleled by the musical bar lines. However much music has gained by new structural forms and new harmonic systems, it has lost something of its primitive breadth and vitality. The primitive ritual encompassed the whole of human personality, for it united belief and action in dance and drama, music and poetry in its song, and in costumes and masks the sculptor's and painter's art. The effect of the intellectual growth of man has been a narrowing down, an analysis leading to specialisation, and this has meant the independent rise of music, dance, poetry, art and religion. In the progress of each they have often become increasingly concerned with scientific, mathematical or technical aspects and possibilities. As soon as man has sufficiently enlarged his conception and his language to include number, then the freedom of rhythm is liable to this numerical discipline. The actual counting of beats may be considered as the beginning of musical science, the rise of which is simultaneous with the projection and progress of the enquiring mind of man scientifically into other spheres.

As man's movement expression has changed from primitive to folk dance, and the latter replaced by staged dance, so has there been a corresponding change in the relation of music to dance. The first musical sounds are vocal ones, or those made by or on the body, as in stamping or clapping, and naturally arise within the dance: they are later supplemented by the use of dried seeds, small bells and other ornamentation motivated by different parts of the body, such as the wrists or the ankles. These sounds, together with the use of simple instruments like tambourines and castanets, whose existence dates at least to the earliest known Egyptian culture, are still a part of the dance—an extension of, rather than an accompaniment to it.

Later, as the instrumental range is extended, these percussion, wind and string instruments are placed outside dance to form a primitive orchestra,

and then finally, with composed music, they are completely detached from the dance. The greatest single influence on the change of the nature of music and musical form has been the introduction of notation. Prior to this, music was more spontaneous, the result of improvisation, and though out of improvisation patterns of rhythm and melody might be retained to form part of a musical tradition, such music was always passed on aurally, allowing the freedom of modification and personal interpretation by the performer. Group music like the xylophone orchestras of the African Chopi people, the Balinese Gamelan or even the jazz of to-day needs a pre-arranged musical framework, but allows for improvisation within this, and in consequence such music has a definite form or structure and yet is at the same time felt and developed from within. The musician capable of group improvisation may not possess any great technical facility, but in being able to react and respond to the changing stresses which arise in the music, possesses a wider, kinaesthetic sense. The music which exists before the use of notation has in it the rhythm and flow of dance, and may actually accompany or be part of dance, while the instruments themselves, uncluttered by technical devices and the need for any complexity of fingering, allow in improvisation for sounds to arise freely upon them. Thus the making of music is in itself a dance in which the fingers or hands move in a way determined by the particular nature of the instrument, from which different kinds of melody and rhythm will arise, characteristic of that instrument. The primitive pipe, for example, though it may possess only a simple pentatonic scale, naturally develops in improvisation an elaboration of ornament, the notation of which by Bartok in Hungary, or Schindler in Spain, is a feat of great musicianship. Music spontaneously and easily evolved may appear incredibly complex both rhythmically and melodically when transcribed to paper, due in part to the limitations of notation, but also resulting from the different nature of the mental and bodily processes concerned in improvised as against composed music. The use of notation has led to the division between composer and performer, and has meant that individual musical ability has been directed to the technique of sight-reading and musical interpretation rather than personal creation. Many skilled musicians are incapable of the simplest improvisation, for they are in reality little more than a sensitive piece of mechanism which stands between the creative idea and the resultant musical sound.

Among the first compositions in Europe are suites of music composed for individual dances current at that time, and it is characteristic of this period that the music is embellished with a variety of ornament—a peculiarity which like the dance form of the music remained from the previous tradition. Composed music, no longer having to support dance, was soon to find a form of its own—it is a stimulus to the ear rather than to the body —so that the element of rhythm becomes of less importance, and, instead, the pattern is stressed: musical form is developed in the sonata or symphony, and melodic lines interwoven as in the fugue. Only a limited harmonic treatment is possible where there is improvisation, but in musical composition the lines of melody may be predetermined and related one to another

to form harmonies, the use of which provides a new dimension in music—a vertical one in contrast to the horizontal line of melody. Until recent times, composers were themselves accomplished musicians able to extemporise freely at the keyboard, as, for example, Scarlatti, Bach, Liszt, Chopin, Schumann, and the natural flow and vitality of their music owed much to this. The final disassociation of music from the dance or any bodily activity is with the contemporary composer, who is often unable to perform on any instrument and relies purely upon the intellect for stimulation. What are often the resultant disjointed creaks and groans are explained with scientific precision as new harmonic theory or rhythmic experiment. The complete opposition of this to the rhythms and melodies of primitive and folk music only reflects the change of man from his instinctive animal self to the thinking, reasoning being—the change from a way of feeling to one of thought.

Where man in the past lived organically and completely, he had an inner harmony, a vitality which flowed out into all his activities and into the things with which he surrounded himself—even utilitarian objects like pots and pans. In improvisation in music and dance, there was a direct flow outwards from his creative centre into bodily activity. Modern man lacks this outward flow and the ability for spontaneous expression, for the more primitive and creative part of his nature is withheld, as his life has become increasingly dominated by intellectual guidance. There is no longer the direct link of creative feeling and action in man's artistic activity, for thought has intervened between them.

Modern dance as an educational or a stage medium has the power to integrate what have become opposing elements of man's nature—thought and feeling—for accepting the greater elaboration of form that might be seen in folk dance, or the technique of production and presentation that belongs to ballet, it has revitalised them with a more expressive and fundamental movement, making use of the whole body in a more " primitive " way.

Similarly there is a field for a new educational use of music and more vital forms of composed music which will parallel the approach and the progress made in modern dance. A study of folk, primitive and oriental music will result in a greater breadth of musical expression—especially through a more varied use of rhythm.

Michael Leonard.

(To be concluded)

ERRATUM

In No. 11 (October, 1953) of the News Sheet, page 26, last sentence: for " alteration ", please read " alternation ".

FORTHCOMING COURSES

MODERN DANCE HOLIDAY COURSE, 1954

This year's summer holiday course will be held at the Bonar Law Memorial College, Ashridge, from August 16th-27th. Particulars may be obtained from the Secretary, Mrs. Logan, Kingshill, Leigh Sinton, near Malvern, Worcs.

REFRESHER COURSE FOR CORPORATE MEMBERS

This will again be held at Lilleshall Hall, Staffordshire, from October 8th-10th, 1954. Further particulars will be circulated later .

WEEK-END COURSE

It is proposed to hold a Week-end Course for the study of movement in relation to the re-education of children and adults. This course will be of interest to occupational therapists, physiotherapists, psychologists, child guidance workers and all those who are interested in helping maladjusted people.

Details of the course can be obtained after April 26th from the Secretary, Art of Movement Studio, Woburn Hill, Addlestone, Surrey.

COPIES OF THE NEWS SHEET

Extra copies of the News Sheet (price 1s. 7½d. post free) may be obtained from the secretaries after members' demands have been satisfied. Copies of some of the back numbers are available for 1s.